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UNFPA – Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

Additional United Nations-mandated security measures required for UNFPA personnel and premises

1. Following the recent attack on United Nations personnel and premises in Algiers, threats to the United Nations in a number of locations around the world have escalated. This has made it necessary for UNFPA to reassess the protective measures, time frame and associated costs required to achieve increased compliance with minimum operating security standards in these locations.

2. As a consequence of the August 2003 attack on the United Nations office in Baghdad, the Executive Board approved, in decision 2004/27, the establishment of a security reserve totalling $6.8 million for the 2004-2005 biennium. The reserve was established to implement additional protective measures to safeguard UNFPA personnel and premises, including: (a) the relocation of some UNFPA country offices to safer premises; (b) enforcing compliance with enhanced minimum operating security standards and minimum operating residential security standards; (c) meeting the UNFPA-apportioned share of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security costs; (d) meeting the increased premium for the malicious acts insurance policy; and (e) establishing a basic security structure within UNFPA. UNFPA discloses information regarding the utilization of the security reserve in its financial statements as well as in the annual financial review to the Executive Board.

3. In decision 2005/37, the Executive Board approved the replenishment of the security reserve in the amount of $4.7 million for the 2006-2007 biennium. The replenishment was necessary for security-related activities that would enable UNFPA to comply with United Nations policy directives and General Assembly resolutions. The costs included: (a) the UNFPA share of United Nations Department of Safety and Security costs; (b) a new global access control system at headquarters; and (c) investments to ensure compliance with minimum operating security standards in country offices and headquarters.

4. Following initial investments from the security reserve, the recurring security costs have now been included in the biennial support budget. They include: (a) the costs of the office of the UNFPA security coordinator and the regional security advisers; (b) recurring costs for maintaining minimum operating security standards and minimum operating residential security standards for various duty stations; and (c) premium costs for the malicious acts insurance policy.

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5. In the wake of the recent bombing, a number of high-risk country offices require, within the next few months, increased levels of compliance with minimum operating security standards; any other country offices that are not compliant with these standards must accelerate their efforts to attain full compliance. As a first measure, UNFPA will assess the 'stand-off' distance surrounding its country offices. Country offices that are unable to secure the necessary distance will be required to relocate to safer premises. Where this is not possible, UNFPA will consider alternative measures to ensure safety, including, but not limited to: (a) blocking traffic around country office premises; (b) controlling parking space; and (c) reinforcing building structures. These initial measures will require high initial capital investments to support compliance with minimum operating security standards.

6. The UNFPA security requirements for the 2008-2009 biennium are outlined in paragraph 22 and in supplementary table VII of the estimates for the biennial support budget, 2008-2009 (DP/FPA/2008/1). Supplementary table VII summarizes the security requirements financed from both the security reserve and from the biennial support budget. As outlined in supplementary table VII, security reserve expenditure estimates total $6.1 million. Of this amount, $3.7 million will be financed by utilizing existing reserve balances; $2.4 million has been included as an additional funding requirement.

7. In view of the developments described in paragraph 5, the preliminary estimates indicate a need for further additional security reserve funds of $5 million. The funds will support increased United Nations-mandated assessments of country office compliance with the minimum operating security standards as well as related investments pertaining to on-site support, compliance of premises, office relocation and security equipment during the 2008-2009 biennium. This requires an increase in the replenishment of the security reserve from $2.4 million (as indicated in document DP/FPA/2008/1) to $7.4 million in 2008-2009. The total security reserve expenditure is thus estimated to increase from $6.1 million to $11.1 million.

8. In the event that unforeseen funding requirements arise in connection with United Nations-mandated security costs, the Executive Director hereby requests the Executive Board to grant her the authority, on an exceptional basis, to access up to an additional 20 per cent ($2.2 million) of the total security reserve expenditure requirement of $11.1 million. UNFPA would limit the use of those funds to new and emerging security mandates as defined through United Nations Department of Safety and Security directives, and would report on the use of the funds in the annual financial review to the Executive Board.

9. The Executive Board may wish to:

(a) Take note of the additional requirements of $5 million for funding the UNFPA security reserve, as outlined in the present document (DP/FPA/2008/CRP.1);

(b) Authorize a further expenditure of $5 million from regular resources to replenish the security reserve, in addition to the $2.4 million requested in the estimates for the biennial support budget for 2008-2009 (DP/FPA/2008/1);

(c) Endorse the proposal of the Executive Director to grant her exceptional authority, during 2008-2009, to access up to an additional 20 per cent ($2.2 million) of the proposed security reserve expenditure requirement of $11.1 million. UNFPA will limit the use of those funds to new and emerging security mandates as defined through United Nations Department of Safety and Security directives, and will report on the use of the funds in the annual financial review to the Executive Board.